



Your Ref:  
Our Ref:  
Contact: G.Beattie Strategic Place Planning  
Location: Business Hub 4  
Date: 24 November 2020

Karen McGregor  
Scotland Director Sustrans  
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Dear Ms McGregor,

I hope this letter finds you well in these challenging times.

On the 28th of October officers of Aberdeen City Council (the Council) presented a report to our City Growth and Resources (CG&R) committee on the program of temporary interventions undertaken as part of Spaces for People (SfP). This committee was the first opportunity for officers to present such an update to elected members at a committee, allowing them to scrutinise the works undertaken to date and instruct any modifications or changes they deemed appropriate. One of the outcomes of that committee was an instruction to write to Sustrans and Transport Scotland to seek clarification on the date by which the funding must be spent.

From the outset of this program officers have been operating under a very clear instruction from our elected members. Due to the extreme pressure on the Council's finances, as a result of COVID 19, any works undertaken as part of SfP had to include the installation, maintenance, and removal of the works. To date that is the financial envelope within which officers have operated and in our recent report we included a financial statement which showed that an appropriate sum had been set aside for the maintenance of these interventions through the winter, and their subsequent removal at some time in the future when it was deemed appropriate to do so. In our discussions with Sustrans we have highlighted that the current spend date of May 2021 would result in officers having to begin the removal of the current temporary interventions in February, to ensure that all cost are incurred within the current agreement period and by no later than May 15th 2021.

At that same committee officers were instructed to monitor the current interventions and report back to February 2021 CG&R committee with recommendations on the future of these interventions. If the current spend date of May is not extended or modified in some way, it appears that officers may be required to recommend the removal of all the interventions in order to comply with our initial committee instruction.

From advice given by our partners at NHS Grampian, who are part of our governance group for SfP, as well as statements by both the First Minister and the Prime Minister, it is not clear at this time that any significant change is expected in public health guidance between now and February. We are aware that other SUSTRANS funding schemes are moving to a multiyear funding model and would suggest that extending the current scheme to eighteen months or two years would address our, and likely many other Local Authorities concerns. To clarify we do not seek additional funding, simply an extension to the currently agreed funding deadline, should the public health situation continue to require it, to ensure currently implemented measures can be maintained and removed at the most appropriate time .

We look forward to hearing from you on this matter at your earliest convenience.

Kind Regards

**Gale Beattie**  
Chief Officer Strategic Place Planning

Cc Mr Michael Matheson  
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity